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SENSITIVE

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [MD](#)

SUBJECT: MOLDOVAN SOCIETY FAILS GAY PRIDE TOLERANCE TEST

Sensitive But Unclassified. Please Protect Accordingly.

**¶1.** (SBU) Summary: Some 400-500 representatives of Moldovan Christian groups, veterans of Afghan and Transnistrian wars and radical skinheads blocked attempts to hold a gay pride march in Chisinau on May 11. Under the terms of a recently adopted law with liberal provisions on public assembly, the gays and lesbians should have been allowed to organize the gay pride parade. The group initially received permission from the Mayor's office, but the permission was withdrawn at the last moment because the mayor feared violence. A bus with some 50 gay activists arrived in the square, but the demonstration was thwarted by opponents who forced the bus to leave and then carried out their own counter-demonstration unimpeded. The incident continues to have resonance as advocates on both sides speak out. End Summary.

War Veterans Threaten Gays ... But Fight Each Other

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**¶2.** (SBU) Moldovan Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transsexual (GLBT) NGO GenderDoc-M got permission from municipal authorities to organize a gay pride parade in Chisinau. The organizers intended to raise awareness about the anti-discrimination bill drafted by the Non-discrimination Coalition, founded in 2007 by major Moldovan human rights NGOs and relevant governmental agencies. A number of religious and veterans' organizations accused GenderDoc-M of promoting immorality and announced their intention to organize a counter-demonstration. Two days before the scheduled march, Chisinau Mayor Dorin Chirtoaca prohibited the march, saying he sought to avoid clashes.

**¶3.** (SBU) Calling themselves the "Family March," some 400-500 counter-demonstrators were waiting at the intended gay pride site. They surrounded the bus, filled with 50 GLBTs from nine different countries, and prevented it from moving further. Policemen at the site ignored the appeals of gay pride participants. Once the bus retreated, Family March participants held a rally for several hours to prevent possible attempts of GLBT activists to return. It was only an eventual fight that broke out between pro-Russian and pro-Romanian anti-GLBTs that caused the police intervene in order to prevent a more massive confrontation.

Comment: Moldova Fails the Tolerance Test

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**¶4.** (SBU) Moldova's failure to permit the march was criticized in liberal European and gay media and internet blogs, while conservative groups are condemning the gay threat to family values and society. Even more centrist leaders espouse limitations on GLBT activism. For example, on May 15 Vice Speaker Iurie Rosca spoke out sharply in parliament in opposition to homosexuality. This incident demonstrates that, despite Moldova's declared readiness to share more progressive European values, Moldova's political leaders still have a way to go to overcome traditional stereotypes and intolerance.

KEIDERLING